United Nations A/C.5/63/SR.41

General Assembly
Sixty-third session

Official Records

Distr.: General
25 June 2009

Original: English

Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 41st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 11 May 2009, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Bródi ..... (Hungary)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Ms. McLurg

Contents

Organization of work

Agenda item 105: Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(b) Appointment of members of the Committee on Contributions

Agenda item 118: Programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 (*continued*)

Security management

Agenda item 133: Financing of the United Nations Operation in Burundi

Agenda item 145: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

09-33309 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Organization of work (A/C.5/63/L.42)

1. **The Chairman** invited the Committee to consider the proposed programme of work for the second part of the resumed sixty-third session, which had been circulated informally and had been prepared on the basis of the note by the Secretariat on the status of preparedness of documentation (A/C.5/63/L.42).

2. **Mr. Abdelmannan** (Sudan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that he regretted the absence of agreement among members of the Bureau on the proposed programme of work and could not understand why a number of matters were being scheduled for discussion as cross-cutting issues under agenda item 132, Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations, instead of under the agenda items to which they logically belonged. Such an approach was not in line with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

3. If that approach was corrected, the Group was prepared to approve a programme of work for the first week of the second part of the resumed session. Instead of appearing under agenda item 132, the report of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee on vacant posts in the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) (A/63/737) should appear under item 117, Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations; the report of the Secretary-General on action taken to improve the timely submission of documents for the Fifth Committee (A/63/735) should appear under item 121, Pattern of conferences; and the updated report on the review of the methodology for rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries (A/63/697) should be kept separate from cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations, having been drawn up in response to General Assembly resolution 62/252 on reformed procedures for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment.

4. **Ms. Krahulcová** (Czech Republic), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the candidate countries Croatia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania and Serbia, and, in addition, Armenia, reiterated that all documents for consideration by the Committee must be available in all six official languages before the beginning of each session. However, despite the one-week postponement of the start of the current session, documentation for some items in the tentative programme of work had still not been issued. With the current session devoted mainly to approving resources for peacekeeping, a core function of the Organization, the European Union believed that a comprehensive approach to the matter, based on in-depth analysis and informed debate, was the only way forward.

5. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Mexico), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, expressed concern at the size of the proposed budgets for peacekeeping operations and urged the Security Council to keep in mind the consequences of its decisions in a climate of economic crisis. Such considerable expenditure also unbalanced the allocation of resources among the activities of the Organization. The Group believed that encouraging development would reduce the amount spent on peacekeeping. Moreover, as the budgets of peacekeeping operations were often left with surplus funds, planning and forecasting should be improved for the sake of greater efficiency and more transparent budgetary implementation.

6. Recourse to the commitment authority authorized by regulation 4.6 of the Organization's Financial Regulations and Rules in anything except an emergency was contrary to good practice and budgetary discipline. Such action, which was not subject to the approval of the General Assembly, should not become the standard way of making up a shortfall in resources when the Security Council approved or extended a peacekeeping mandate.

7. Cross-cutting issues were relevant to rational, efficient and accountable peacekeeping. However, the Group believed that the consideration of such issues had yielded disappointing results in the past and agreed with the view expressed by the Advisory Committee in its earlier report on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/63/746) that not all such issues required annual policy direction from the General Assembly. The Group hoped that separate and sufficient consideration would be given to the report of the Secretary-General on the review of the methodology for rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries (A/63/697) and the report of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee on vacant posts in the Office of Internal Oversight Services (A/63/737).

8. The Group was also concerned that the tentative programme of work erroneously implied a connection between peacekeeping and other important matters which deserved sufficient and separate consideration. They included the pattern of conferences, resources for the Human Rights Council and its universal periodic review and the prospect of indefinite postponement of the national competitive examination.

9. **Ms. Helu** (Namibia), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, expressed the disappointment of the Group at the failure of the Bureau to propose a programme of work by consensus, setting the wrong tone at the start of the session, which had already begun later than planned. The Committee should ensure that its attention remained on the important and time-bound peacekeeping matters before it, remembering the current financial crisis and the fact that peace and security were a prerequisite for economic development.

10. The Group believed that the reports concerning the timely submission of documents for the Fifth Committee (A/63/735), vacant posts in the Office of Internal Oversight Services (A/63/737) and rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries (A/63/696) should be discussed not in the context of cross-cutting issues connected with peacekeeping, but in their own right. Attempts to do otherwise could be motivated by factors other than the effective fulfilment of the mandate given to the Fifth Committee by the General Assembly. The Group stood ready to approve a programme of work based on the principles just explained in order to prevent delays in addressing the Committee's heavy workload.

11. **Mr. Rashkow** (United States of America) said that the proposed budgets for current peacekeeping missions, if adopted, would reach some $8.5 billion, more than double the regular budget for 2008-2009 and 20 per cent higher than the previous peacekeeping total. However, the unforeseen economic and financial crisis meant that Member States were facing an increase in the peacekeeping budget at a time when they could least afford such an increase. The Secretariat and the Member States should therefore carefully examine the proposed budgets to eliminate any expenditure that was not absolutely necessary.

12. While his delegation understood the challenge of preparing and reviewing budget proposals, it was concerned that late submission of the reports containing peacekeeping budget details, particularly in the case of large missions such as the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), would leave the Committee too little time to consider complex questions. He therefore urged the Secretary-General, who was ultimately responsible for timely performance of the Secretariat's functions, to work with the departments concerned to address the recurring problem of late submission of reports. It also urged the Advisory Committee to examine how it could improve the situation.

13. **Mr. Mukai** (Japan) said that the record level of the proposed peacekeeping budget was set against a background of financial and economic challenges not seen in decades. The Organization should therefore ensure that oversight, management and financial control were commensurate with the increase in expenditure.

14. The substantial peacekeeping budget total made it all the more necessary for the Committee to make full use of the four weeks available to it at the current part of the resumed session. It was unfortunate that the Bureau had been unable to reach a consensus on a tentative programme of work to propose to the Committee, that the Committee was still awaiting documentation regarding the larger peacekeeping missions and that the Advisory Committee was unlikely to finalize its reports to the Fifth Committee in time for them to be considered.

15. His delegation urged the Committee secretariat and Bureau to improve coordination with the Chairman of the Advisory Committee in order to achieve better synchronization of work. However, it recognized the excessive burden being placed on the infrastructure of the General Assembly. Efforts should be made to rationalize the winter session of the Advisory Committee and the first and second parts of the resumed General Assembly session for the Fifth Committee in order to address peacekeeping issues more efficiently. It was time to consider shortening the first part of the resumed session and lengthening the second, while remaining within the overall limit on the Committee's conference-servicing resources, which allowed it to meet for eight weeks in resumed session.

16. **The Chairman**, expressing his deep regret at the failure in the Committee to reach agreement on a

programme of work, said that the Bureau had in fact achieved a consensus on the tentative programme currently before the Committee, but would welcome an alternative proposal from the Member States. He urged them to overcome their differences in order to avoid further delays. The Bureau would meet again following the current meeting in order to discuss the way forward.

17. **Ms. Samayoa-Recari** (Guatemala) said that it was not unusual for the Committee to adopt a programme of work week by week or even day by day. The regional groups were not refusing to discuss certain matters, they merely disagreed over the manner of their discussion. She suggested that efforts should continue to find a consensus, and that, in the meantime, the work of the Committee should be allowed to continue unhindered simply by removing a contentious issue from the programme of work proposed for the following day.

18. **Mr. Abdelmannan** (Sudan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that he had hoped that reason and wisdom might prevail in the discussion of the Committee's proposed programme of work and regretted the failure to reach consensus. However, he could not see how it was possible to proceed with a programme of work which had not first been agreed. As the disagreement centred on the matters currently scheduled for discussion under the agenda item devoted to cross-cutting issues, and specifically the pattern of conferences and reimbursements to troop-contributing countries, perhaps the Bureau could propose for the first week of the current resumed session a programme of work that simply omitted cross-cutting issues altogether.

19. **Mr. Cumberbatch** (Cuba) said that, while his delegation wished to reiterate that if the same urgency and resources had been devoted to development as to peacekeeping, the Millennium Development Goals could be achieved on schedule, it believed that the Committee must act rapidly to approve budgets for the current peacekeeping missions.

20. With regard to the substance of the proposed programme of work, there was no logic in failing to adhere to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly by scheduling for discussion under agenda item 132 reports originally introduced under other agenda items, specifically the report of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee on vacant posts in the Office of Internal Oversight Services, and the reports of the Secretary-General on timely submission of documents for the Fifth Committee and on rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries.

21. **Mr. Abdelmannan** (Sudan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Chairman's suggested course of action — returning discussion of the proposed programme of work to the Bureau — was unlikely to lead to consensus. He wished to know the status of his Group's proposal to adopt a programme of work for the day and to facilitate continuation of the Committee's discussions thereafter by removing cross-cutting issues from its programme of work until agreement was reached on how to address them.

22. **The Chairman** said he took it that the Committee wished to adopt the proposed programme of work for the current day only.

23. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 105: Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(b) Appointment of members of the Committee on Contributions (A/63/102/Add.1)

24. **The Chairman** drew the Committee's attention to the note by the Secretary-General (A/63/102/Add.1) informing the General Assembly of the resignation of Mr. Thomas Thomma from the Committee on Contributions and requesting the Assembly to appoint a person to fill the remaining portion of Mr. Thomma's term of office, which would expire on 31 December 2011.

25. The Government of Germany had nominated Ms. Gönke Roscher to fill the ensuing vacancy and her candidature had been endorsed by the Group of Western European and other States. He took it that the Committee decided, by acclamation, to recommend the appointment of Ms. Gönke Roscher as a member of the Committee on Contributions, beginning on the date of the appointment by the General Assembly and ending on 31 December 2011.

26. *It was so decided.*

27. *The Committee recommended to the General Assembly the appointment of Ms. Roscher to membership of the Committee on Contributions for a term of office beginning on the date of her appointment and expiring on 31 December 2011.*

Agenda item 118: Programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 (*continued*)

Security management (A/62/641; A/63/379, A/63/605 and A/63/769

28. **Mr. Veness** (Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on a strengthened and unified security management system for the United Nations (A/63/605), said that, pending the finalization of a detailed management review of the organizational structure of the Department of Safety and Security, the Department must address as a matter of priority the strengthening of certain key areas, for which additional resources must be allocated in 2009. While there had been criticism of add-ons to the 2008-2009 budget, there was no other option if the Department was to discharge its mandate effectively. The resources requested in the report were not likely to be affected by the outcome of the management review, which would only be considered by the General Assembly in the context of the proposed programme budget for 2010-2011.

29. The second phase of the standardized access control project (PACT II) needed to be implemented immediately to ensure continuity, meet the needs of vulnerable duty stations where the first phase (PACT I) had not been implemented, and safeguard the return on investment. However, the second phase could not begin until the necessary resources, which would also need to be rolled over into early 2010 for obligation purposes, were available.

30. The staffing resources requested were also essential in order to operate the new system in all duty stations but the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and in security control centres. In addition, as no change was foreseen in the security situation in Beirut, there was an urgent need for dedicated resources to be made available on a permanent basis to ESCWA, as the current ad hoc arrangements were not sustainable. Additional resources were also required to improve the security of the Secretary-General's representatives in the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO); to bolster executive protection capacity within the Security and Safety Service at Headquarters; and, if warranted, to regularize the protection extended to former Secretaries-General and other senior officials.

31. Other field-related security requirements requiring immediate attention by Member States included the establishment of an aviation risk management capacity within the Department, and strengthening of the Department's Division of Regional Operations, in particular by increasing staffing both at Headquarters and in the field, strengthening its security analytical capacity, establishing new security and information operation centres in particular countries, establishing a surge capacity in the Department, and strengthening field support services at Headquarters through the recruitment of senior security trainers with extensive experience in the field.

32. **Mr. Herman** (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on measures taken to ensure the effective implementation of the arrangements in place for the sharing of costs for safety and security across the United Nations system (A/62/641), recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 61/263, had invited the Secretary-General to ensure common safety and security policies and the sharing of associated costs across the United Nations system, and to report on safety and security-related expenditures. Accordingly, the High-level Committee on Management of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) had recently completed an exercise to collect such information based on audited financial statements for the biennium 2006-2007; the results would be published shortly.

33. He reminded the Committee of the principles and modalities governing the sharing of the costs associated with the security management system, as set out in the report of the Secretary-General on interorganizational security measures (A/56/469), and recalled that the High-level Committee, at its thirteenth session, in March 2007, had considered a report by its Technical Working Group on cost-sharing arrangements and had explored possible ways of improving them. At its fourteenth session, in September 2007, the High-level Committee had endorsed the recommendations of its Technical Working Group that the costs of the United Nations security management system should be apportioned on the basis of the percentage of United Nations system personnel based in countries not members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; that the headcount should be carried out centrally by the CEB secretariat, with organizations of

the system remaining accountable for the figures provided; that the minimum level of participation of $75,000 should be increased by the same percentage as the recosting that had occurred since the last biennium; and that implementation of the agreed changes should be applied uniformly to all participants in the security management system.

34. **Ms. McLurg** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/63/769), said that the report of the Secretary-General (A/63/605) did not fully respond to the concern expressed by the General Assembly that the question of strengthening security arrangements for the United Nations should be dealt with in an integrated manner, in that it failed to take into account many security-related issues.

35. Following the recommendation of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security of United Nations Personnel and Premises Worldwide that a management review should be undertaken of the Department of Safety and Security, and in the light of the Controller's recent letter to the Advisory Committee, informing it that such a review could be expected to have a substantial effect on the organizational structure, mode of operations and level and composition of the resource requirements of the Department, the Advisory Committee recommended that a comprehensive report should be prepared on the safety and security policy framework of the United Nations. The report should also take into account the outcome of the management review and be submitted to the General Assembly early in the main part of the sixty-fourth session, so as to enable it to be considered in conjunction with the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011. Since, as had been acknowledged by the Controller, any proposals concerning the proposed programme budget for the Department for the biennium 2010-2011 would have limited value so long as the outcome of the management review had not been evaluated, the Secretary-General intended to submit an interim proposed budget for the Department in the coming months, while its full budget estimates for the biennium 2010-2011 would be submitted, through the Advisory Committee, to the General Assembly at the main part of the sixty-fourth session.

36. Turning to the specific proposals contained in part one of the report of the Secretary-General, she said that many of the Advisory Committee's recommendations hinged on the outcome of the management review and of the forthcoming report of the Secretary-General on the safety and security policy framework of the United Nations.

37. The Advisory Committee recommended against approval of the additional posts requested for executive protection and related non-post requirements and that no action should be taken on the proposal to extend security coverage to former senior United Nations officials. It had no objection to the proposed additional funding of $1.9 million for the first phase of the standardized access control project. With regard to projects under the second phase, and considering that the Secretariat had not been able to begin work on them prior to April 2009, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretary-General should submit directly to the General Assembly revised resource requirements for those second phase projects that needed to be started in 2009 to ensure continuity and that the staff costs included in those requirements should be based on general temporary assistance rather than posts. The remaining requirements for the second phase should take into account the Secretary-General's report on a safety and security policy framework and should be submitted in the context of the proposed programme budget for 2010-2011.

38. With respect to additional requirements in specific locations, the Advisory Committee recommended the establishment of 45 additional Security Officer posts at ESCWA, the acquisition of two armoured vehicles for UNTSO and the establishment of nine additional posts at UNSCO. Regarding security requirements at United Nations information centres, it had no objection to the proposal for the funding of additional security requirements from within existing resources during the biennium 2008-2009, but expected that, in future, there would be discussions with host Governments to ensure the required security at no additional cost to the United Nations.

39. Regarding the proposals in part two of the Security-General's report, a comprehensive plan on jointly financed security requirements would be the subject of a CEB report, in what appeared to be a piecemeal approach to such requirements. The resources requested in part two of the report were closely linked to the outcome of the management review and the development of the comprehensive

plan, and should be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for 2010-2011.

40. The Advisory Committee recommended against establishment of an aviation risk management capacity within the Department, which needed to be further justified in view of the fact that such a capacity already existed elsewhere. It had no objection to the proposed redeployments to strengthen the capacity of the regional desks, noting that no additional resources were required for that purpose.

41. With regard to the increased deployment of field security officers, the Advisory Committee recommended against establishment of the five requested posts and did not agree that security chiefs in all duty stations should be at the same rank. The replication of the Lebanon model for other duty stations was questionable in view of the unique threat level in that country. The Advisory Committee recommended that the remaining requirements for field security officers should be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011, as should the two proposed P-4 posts for the Division of Regional Operations following completion of the management review and the comprehensive plan. However, the Advisory Committee recommended against the establishment of a D-1 post for a Deputy Director of that Division, the managerial and operational capacity of which could be significantly enhanced if the Director concentrated more on responsibilities at Headquarters. As for the proposed 29 additional posts in order to strengthen security analytical capacity and the establishment of 25 posts at five security and information operation centres, the Advisory Committee recommended that those proposals should also be considered in the light of the outcome of the management review and the comprehensive plan.

42. Lastly, the Advisory Committee did not recommend approval of the proposal to establish a standing surge capacity within the Department, entailing the establishment of 10 P-4 posts for Security Officers in New York, or the proposal to establish four additional posts for security training officers.

43. **Ms. Ahlenius** (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), introducing the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the comprehensive management audit of the Department of Safety and Security (A/63/379), said that governance and coordination issues needed to be addressed as a priority at the highest levels in order to strengthen the Department of Safety and Security and effectively mitigate the security risks facing the United Nations. The audit had found that stakeholders were concerned about the effectiveness of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network and particularly that it might not review and promulgate policies in a timely or adequate manner, with an attendant risk of disintegration of the security management system. OIOS therefore considered that there was an urgent need to review the structure and functions of the Network.

44. OIOS had also found that an internal document issued by the Department entitled "Lines of Reporting, Responsibilities and Administrative Arrangements for Security and Safety Services at Offices Away from Headquarters and Regional Commissions" was ambiguous and imprecise and that it was not consistent with the framework for accountability established for the United Nations security management system. Those weaknesses led to diminished accountability and could compromise the safety and security of United Nations staff. Similarly, OIOS felt that the dual reporting line of the Chief Security Adviser lacked clarity, and had, in one duty station, created tension between the Chief Security Adviser and the Designated Official.

45. OIOS considered that there was need to address the impediments to the professionalization of security personnel and creation of a career path within the United Nations security management system, as recommended in General Assembly resolution 59/276. The impediments related to the harmonization of contractual arrangements, establishment of security personnel profiles and standardization of recruitment practices. Coordination between the Department of Safety and Security and other departments was adequate.

46. OIOS had issued 16 recommendations, including recommendations for the Department to assess the effectiveness and adequacy of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network; to initiate appropriate procedures and guidelines that would clarify the role and responsibilities of the Department and the Designated Officials away from Headquarters and the regional commissions; to clarify the objectives and scope of the Department's technical supervision, policy direction and operational guidance provided to Chief Security Advisers in the field and reassess their reporting lines; and to request the Office of Human

Resources Management to review the feasibility of harmonizing the contractual arrangements of locally recruited security personnel to facilitate their mobility.

47. The Department had accepted and started to implement all the recommendations of OIOS. In addition, the Steering Committee established by CEB to review the functioning of the inter-Agency Security Management Network had issued a report on safety and security recommending CEB approval of adjustments to the framework for accountability by April 2009 as part of the review of the overall security architecture. On the harmonization of contractual arrangements for locally recruited personnel, the Department had noted that the High-level Committee on Management had requested its Human Resources Network to report on related human resources issues at the autumn 2009 session.

48. **Mr. Abdelmannan** (Sudan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group stood ready to work closely with the new Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security to establish a strengthened and unified security management system with criteria for determining security requirements and standards for worldwide threat and risk assessment that would justify the additional resources needed by the Department of Safety and Security to ensure its ability to respond to any emergency, bearing in mind the varying levels of risks and threats in different locations.

49. The Group reiterated its support for the provision of safety and security for all United Nations staff, operations and premises, as well as for measures to ensure a coherent, effective and timely response to all security-related threats and other emergencies. However, it wished to emphasize the importance of transparency and accountability in addressing the issue of safety and security. In that connection, it noted the recommendation of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security of United Nations Personnel and Premises Worldwide that the Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security should conduct a management review of the Department of Safety and Security with the purpose of better defining roles and responsibilities and establishing clear lines of accountability, and its further recommendation that the level and allocation of additional human and financial resources required by that Department should be determined following the review. It also noted that the Office of Internal Oversight Services had recommended in its report (A/63/379) that the Department of Safety and Security should, in consultation with the Inter-Agency Security Management Network, reassess its current staffing levels and its structure, clearly identifying the major functions of its divisions and units. The Group was concerned that the Secretary-General had not yet presented to the General Assembly his report on a comprehensive safety and security policy framework at the United Nations, as requested by the Assembly in its resolution 61/263. Lastly, the report of the Independent Panel on Accountability should be made available to Member States without delay. His delegation called on the Secretary-General to provide all relevant information and the outcomes of all requested reviews, in order to facilitate the Committee's informed discussion of the issues in question at the main part of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

50. **Ms. Krahulcová** (Czech Republic), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Armenia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the European Union considered it an absolute necessity and priority for the Organization to initiate all steps needed to protect effectively United Nations staff and premises, particularly bearing in mind that the Organization now had a greater worldwide presence than ever before and, consequently, greater exposure to all kinds of risk. The Union therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative to propose measures to strengthen the safety and security of United Nations personnel. While the European Union agreed with the Advisory Committee that the question of strengthening security arrangements for the United Nations should be dealt with in an integrated manner and that a comprehensive report on a safety and security policy framework of the United Nations should be submitted to the General Assembly at the sixty-fourth session to permit consideration of the report in conjunction with the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011, it believed that some proposals might require urgent consideration by Member States and stood ready to discuss them further.

51. **Ms. White** (Australia), speaking also on behalf of Canada and New Zealand, said that, although the creation of the Department of Safety and Security had been an important first step in ensuring a systematic and professional approach to staff safety and security,

the task of providing security was a huge challenge in view of the increasingly threatening security environment for the United Nations, the size of its workforce and its presence in more than 180 countries. It was nevertheless, the duty of the Secretary-General and of Member States to do so.

52. Recalling that the General Assembly, in its resolution 61/263, had emphasized the need for a comprehensive safety and security policy framework, and that a number of other reports, including the OIOS report (A/63/379) and the report of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security, had echoed the need to review operations to better define roles and responsibilities and establish clear lines of accountability, he said that the three delegations were awaiting the outcomes of the management review due to be completed in May 2009 pursuant to the Independent Panel's recommendations. Furthermore, while they understood that the comprehensive report on the safety and security policy framework of the United Nations had been delayed following the terrorist attack on the United Nations in Algiers, pending a review of security policies and procedures, they urged the Secretary-General to complete that report as soon as possible, in order to allow Member States to consider all aspects of the strengthening of safety and security in an integrated and timely manner.

53. Although the three delegations would prefer not to determine the level of human and financial resources required by the Department of Safety and Security until after the management review, in accordance with the recommendations of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security, they concurred with the Secretary-General that some elements of security required urgent consideration. In particular, work on the first and second phases of the standardized access control project needed to be continued, as stated in the Advisory Committee's report (A/63/769); in that connection, the three delegations looked forward to receiving revised resource requirements from the Secretariat. The particularly challenging security situations faced by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process should also be addressed immediately. It was especially urgent to provide for the security of vulnerable United Nations operations in remote locations; in that regard, some strengthening of security analytical capacity was warranted. The Committee had a collective responsibility to provide for the safety and security of the staff of the United Nations system.

54. **Mr. Gürber** (Switzerland), speaking also on behalf of Liechtenstein, said that the terrorist attack on the United Nations in Algiers had shown the cost of underestimating the importance of safety and security. Since Member States expected United Nations staff members to execute faithfully all the legislative mandates entrusted to them, they had a corresponding duty to make every effort to improve their security and minimize the risks to which they were exposed.

55. Discussions on a comprehensive safety and security policy framework at the United Nations could not take place until the Secretary-General had completed his management review, in accordance with the recommendations of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security. Given the importance of that issue, the two delegations hoped that a comprehensive report on a safety and security policy framework would be submitted to the General Assembly sufficiently early in the main part of the sixty-fourth session to permit consideration of the report in conjunction with the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011. While they regretted that the Committee had not been able to examine the issue of safety and security at the first part of the resumed sixty-third session and that the programme of work for the current part of the session allowed insufficient time for detailed consideration, they stood ready to discuss the Secretary-General's resource requests, bearing in mind the Advisory Committee's recommendations on various specific requirements that warranted immediate attention.

56. **Mr. Yamada** (Japan) reiterated his delegation's regret that the proposals made by the Secretary-General in his report on revised estimates in connection with a strengthened and unified security management system for the United Nations (A/63/605) followed a piecemeal budget approach rather than adhering to the normal budget cycle and that they neglected some important issues, including accountability and a review of the management of the Department of Safety and Security, as highlighted by the Independent Panel on Safety and Security. Taking note of the letter from the Controller addressed to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, annexed to the Advisory Committee's report (A/63/769), his

delegation considered that the budgetary aspects of safety and security should be considered only when all the relevant reports, including the comprehensive report on a safety and security policy framework of the United Nations, had been received and could be fully discussed. In that connection, he wondered whether the comprehensive report was likely to be completed in May 2009, as indicated in the Advisory Committee's report (A/63/769). If so, he requested that the Committee should be provided with an outline of the report at the current meeting.

57. **Mr. Chumakov** (Russian Federation) said that the resources provided by the Member States to establish a comprehensive safety and security policy framework must be managed in a rational and effective way, and he accordingly supported the recommendations of OIOS, specifically for a clearer delineation of roles and responsibilities within the Department of Safety and Security. The Department should establish closer cooperation with and within the Inter-Agency Security Management Network.

58. He remained unconvinced by the reasons offered by the Department for its delay in providing a comprehensive report on strengthening safety and security in response to the request made by the General Assembly in its resolution 61/263. The Department's requests for resources suffered from being submitted piecemeal and often lacked justification and proof of urgency. His delegation would bear in mind that the Advisory Committee had recommended approval of only $1.9 million out of the total of $52 million of additional resources requested from the current budget for the standardized access control system and for temporary posts.

59. His delegation expressed its readiness to ensure the safety and security of the Organization's staff at Headquarters and in the field by seeking a rational and balanced approach to the issue. The expected report of the Secretary-General should provide a basis for discussion and, ultimately, for the priorities to govern the budget for the forthcoming biennium in that regard.

60. **Mr. Ronaghan** (United States of America) said that his delegation looked forward to receiving the outcomes of the management review carried out pursuant to the Independent Panel's recommendations, as well as the comprehensive report on a safety and security policy framework of the United Nations to be submitted to the General Assembly pursuant to its resolution 61/263. His delegation took note of the recommendations made by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination with regard to the High-level Committee on Management at its spring session and considered that they should be incorporated into the comprehensive report. The new Under-Secretary-General should be given the opportunity to review and comment on that report before its consideration by the Committee.

61. While his delegation concurred with the view expressed in the Advisory Committee's report (A/63/769) that the question of strengthening security arrangements for the United Nations should be dealt with in an integrated manner, it was prepared to consider proposals that involved an immediate risk to life, or otherwise required urgent consideration, at the current part of the resumed sixty-third session.

Agenda item 133: Financing of the United Nations Operation in Burundi (A/63/551 and A/63/773)

Agenda item 145: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (A/63/681 and A/63/746/Add.1)

62. **Ms. Vendat** (Director, Peacekeeping Financing Division), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) (A/63/551), said that the report provided details on the final disposition of that Mission's assets, valued at $59,152,442 as at 3 November 2008. Some of the assets had been transferred to other missions or to temporary storage at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy ($51,336,469); others had been sold in the Mission area ($1,936,205) or donated to the Government of Burundi ($2,799,417); yet others had been written off or lost ($3,080,351). The General Assembly was invited to take note of the report.

63. Introducing the final performance report of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) (A/63/681), she said that the report included information on the assets, outstanding liabilities and fund balance as at 30 June 2008 in respect of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) and UNAMSIL, as well as information on UNOMSIL income and expenditure for the period from its inception on 13 July 1998 to 30 June 2008. As at 30 June 2008, cash assets in the Special Account for UNAMSIL had amounted to $109,125,000 and

outstanding liabilities to $93,976,000, resulting in a cash balance of $15,149,000, which the Secretary-General proposed to credit to Member States. As at 30 April 2009, the cash balance had increased by $484,000 to $15,633,000; that amount could therefore be returned to Member States.

64. **Ms. McLurg** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the final disposition of assets of ONUB (A/63/773), said that the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should take note of the report. It also recommended that a fuller explanation of the final dispositions of assets should be provided in future reports of the Secretary-General, including the residual value of all groups of assets, in order to present a more transparent and precise overview and to allow lessons to be learned.

65. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the final performance report of UNAMSIL (A/63/746/Add.1), she said that the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should accept the Secretary-General's proposal to credit to Member States the cash balance of $15,149,000 available in the Special Account for UNAMSIL as at 30 June 2008. While an additional amount of $7,248,000 in uncollected assessments and other receivables had been outstanding as at that date, the Advisory Committee had since been informed that the cash balance had increased to $15.6 million as at 31 March 2009.

66. The Advisory Committee had also been informed that any further information on the financial position of UNAMSIL would be provided to the General Assembly in the context of the Secretary-General's report on closed peacekeeping missions. The Special Account for UNAMSIL would remain open until uncollected assessments and other receivables were received, unless another decision was taken by the Assembly.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.